

Minutes of Finance and Governance Committee
Illinois P-20 Council
Meeting date: April 6, 2011

This meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee was held at the Illinois Community College office at 401 Capitol Avenue on April 6, 2011. Co-Chair Ray Hancock called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

Also participating in the meeting: Laurel Prussing, co-chair; D.K.Hirner (for the Lt. Governor), Dan Harris (for Diana Rauner), Dean Langdon (for Michael Johnson), Eric Lichtenberger, Gary Niehaus, Paul Sarvela (for Glen Poshard), P20 staff Ann Courter. Participating by phone: Kathy Ryg, Lizanne DeStefano, and Amber Kirchhoff. Committee members not able to attend: Ron Bullock, Perry Buckley, Linda Chapa LaVia.

The minutes from the March 2 meeting were approved, on motion by Gary Niehaus, seconded by Dan Harris.

The committee discussed each of the 20 priority items members had submitted prior to the meeting.

Questions were asked about the status of HB1216, which would establish a commission to recommend school consolidations. Laurel Prussing moved that the Finance and Governance Committee recommend to the P-20 Council that the P-20 Council should take the lead in statewide reorganization efforts. Eric Lichtenberger seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. [DK Hirner did not vote, since the Lt. Governor is not a committee member.]

Kathy Ryg noted that the Human Services Commission recommendations will soon be made public, and there will be impacts from budget cuts on pre-K to career education, including ISBE's budget. She suggested that the Council join in a coordinated effort to prioritize the outcomes we seek for children and families by stepping outside the silos that have divided education and human services. A conversation about budget options should also be connected to a discussion of revenue options.

Laurel Prussing requested more information about best practices in governance and school financing, looking at international comparisons as well as Massachusetts. Eric and Ann will work together to provide additional information.

Other key issues the committee agreed are priorities:

- Ending funding disparities between schools
- affordability for college students,
- remediation required at the college level in math and English,
- 2+2+2 programs to enable community college dual credit with high schools, and easier transfer of credit to 4-year universities.
- Looking at a way to allow high schools to receive state ADA funding for students attending college, using Iowa as a possible model

- Aligning the entrance requirements for community colleges throughout the state, and streamlining with universities—currently, each school sets its own standards and has its own admissions and placement tests
- Make plan to get closer to providing full funding for the EFAB GSA recommendations, with a more thorough review of adjustments to the poverty grant and other areas; look at budgeting for outcomes
- Look at whether it might be possible and desirable to change the funding mechanism to cover preschool through higher education
- Look for a way to include cost of living disparities in state funding
- Study salary disparities throughout the state, and ways to provide additional flexibility to attract needed specialties
- Provide additional supports for at-risk students: RTI, differentiated instruction, truancy programs, alternative education, social and emotional learning, positive behavior interventions and supports, afterschool programs, summer school, community based youth programs---these are cost-effective programs, but need ISBE support for training.
- Look at how university teacher prep programs can continue to provide professional development for their graduates
- Provide stable education funding guarantees for 3 years so districts can plan and negotiate contracts, and avoid displacement and shuffling of teachers.
- Provide sustainable school funding
- Reduce non-personnel costs through cooperative purchasing with local governments, community colleges, Regional Offices of Education
- Reduce the time lag between receipt of sales tax and federal grant funds and delivery to the classroom—and the filter fees
- Break ISBE down into 6 hubs as they do with technology, and align with preschool and college hubs to move students along the P-20 spectrum. Coordinate curriculum, assessment, admission, and common core standards.
- Work on grants for the enhancement of P-20 initiatives.
- Provide state interventions to assist local districts even when they don't want it.

We concluded by reviewing all 20 of the priority items on the agenda and, then, adding the concept of Regional superintendents as an additional item. We also explored the idea of reviewing more centralized, regionalized governance structures, realizing that each state in the U.S. has a slightly different variation of both governance and funding. There was discussion about a true “State Board of Education” in Illinois that could make major strides toward a seamless, quality system of education that would be more equitable to all citizens.

We asked Eric to explore the idea of providing us some exemplary models of education as follows:

1. Some best practices in American and international systems of education.
2. Some exemplary funding plans in other States/territories.
3. Some exemplary governance structures in other States/territories.